

# A New Magna Charta:

Enacted and confirmed

By the High and Mighty States, the Remainder  
of the LORDS and COMMONS, now sitting at Westminster in Empty Parliament, under the Command and Wardship of Sir  
*Thomas Fairfax*, Lieut. Gen. *Cromwel* (our present Sovereign  
Lord the King, now residing at his Royal Palace in White-  
hall) and Prince *Ireton* his Son, and the Army under  
their Command.

Containing the many new, large, and ample Liberties,  
Customes, and Franchises, of late freely granted and confirmed to our So-  
veraign Lord King *Charles*, his Heirs and Successours; the Church  
and State of *England* and *Ireland*, and all the Freemen and  
Free-born People of the same.

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New Magna Charta, Cap. 29.

*Omni vendemus, omni negabimus, aut differemus iustitiam,  
vel rectum.*



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## A New Magna Charta.

**F**irst, for the honour of Almighty God, and in pursuance of the solemn League and Covenant which we made in the presence of Almighty God for the Reformation and defence of Religion, the honour and happiness of the King, and the peace and safety of the three Kingdoms of *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, we have granted, and by this present Charter confirmed, That the Church of *England* shall be free to deny the perpetuall Ordinances of Jesus Christ, to countenance spreading heresies, cursed blasphemies, and generall loosenesse and prophanenesse, and that all Lawes and statutes formerly made against the aforesaid offences, for the punishment and restraining thereof shall be utterly repealed, that so all men may freely enjoy and professe what Religion soever they please without restraint. And we will that all Arch-bishops, Bishops, and their Dependants, shall be eternally suppressed, and all their Mannors, Lands, and possessions sold, to defray and advance the publique Faith.

That all Ministers shall bee plundered and thrust out of their Livings and Free-holds, by our Committee of plundering Ministers, without Oath or legall tryall, upon bare information of such of their parishioners who are indebted to them for Tythes, or have any kinsman to prefer to their Livings. And to supply the want of Ministers, That all Officers; Souldiers, Coblers, Tinkers, and gifted Brethren and Sisters, shall freely preach, and propogate the Gospel to the people, and new dip and rebaptize them without punishment.

*Item*, We will that the Kings Majesties person may be maintained, and his Authority preserved, by seizing his person at *Holdenby* with a party of horse and imprisoning him in the Army, indangering his life at *Hampton-Court*, & by colour thereof, conveying him secretly in the Isle of *Wight*, removing from him all his Attendants, disposing of his Revenue, Children, Forts, ships, Castles, & Kingdoms, and by this putting in execution these our Votes,

That no more addreses be made from the *Parl.* to the King, nor any Letters or Message received from him. That it shall be treason for any persons whatsoever to deliver any Message to the King, or receive any Messages or Letters from him, without leave from both Houses of Parliament. That a Committee draw up a Declaration to be published, to satisfie the Kingdoms, of the reason of passing these



*Votes*, That so the world may bear witness, with our consciences of our Loyaltie, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish His Majesties just power and greatnesse, according to the words of the solempne League and Covenant.

*Item*, We give and grant to the Freemen of the Realm these liberties underwritten. First, that no Sheriffes shall make due returns of the Citizens and Burgeses elected to serve in Parliament, nor make due Elections of Knights, nor in convenient time, nor the ablest wisest, nor discreetest shall be returned, but all fraud and deceit shall be used in Elections, and persons not duly elected, nor eligible by Law shall be Members of the House of Commons, and those to be our sonnes, kindred, servants, Officers and such as will comply with us.

*Item*, No Member shall sit in the House of Commons with freedom and safety that endeavours to settle Religion in the purity thereof, according to the Covenant, to maintaine the ancient and fundamentall Government of the Kingdom, or to preserve the Rights and Liberties of the Subdct, or that layes hold on the first opportunity of procuring a safe and well-grounded peace in the three Kingdoms. or that keepes a good understanding between the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland, according to the grounds expressed in the solempn League and Covenant.

And whoever offends against this Article, we will that such Members be impeached of high Treason, by the Army, suspended the House before any particular impeachment, forced to accuse themselves by stating their cases for want of an accuser, and witnesses to prove them criminall, and at the last cast out of the House without answer, hearing the evidences, or privy of those that elected them whose persons they represent.

*Item*, We grant, that neither we nor any by colour of Authority deprived from us shall interrupt the ordinary course of Justice in the severall Courts and Judicatures of the Kingdom, nor intermeddle in causes of private interest otherwise determinable, *save onely our Committees of Indemnities, plundered Ministers, Complaints, Sequestrations Excise and the Army*, who shall judge and contradict the Laws and Statutes of the Realme, vacate and repeale all Indictments, Verdicts, and Justice, imprison all manner of persons, and turne them out of their Freeholds, Estates, Goods, and Chatties without the lawfull judgment of their Peers, and against the fundamentall Laws of the Land.

*Item*, we will and ordaine that the great and unusuall payments imposed upon the people, and the extraordinary waies that were taken for procuring monies, shall (contrary to the trust reposed in us) be still burthensome, and daily increased more and more upon the people by our bare Votes and Ordinances, *without the common consent by Act of Parliament*; and in case of refusal, forcibly levied by Troops of horse and souldiers, according to the law of decolled Stafford, of all which monies ourselves and Members will be

*Sole treasurers and disposers:* Free-quarter shall be still tolerated, and countenance given by us to the exactions and extortions of the soldiers, to whom we have granted an *Ordinance of indemnity*, for all murders, felonies, rapes, robberies, injuries and trespasses committed by them, and all such offences as they shall commit, to the end they may protect us against the clamours and complaints of the oppressed people either by sea or land: and we do rain, that all Free-men shall henceforth be tryed by *Martiall and Committee Law*, and impeached of new high Treason at our pleasure, to confiscate their Estates to our Exchequer.

*Item,* We will that such persons as have done valiantly, and dealt faithfully in the Parliaments cause, according to the *Declaration of England and Scotland*, shall be publicly disgraced and dishonoured, and without cause thrust from their commands and employments, both Civill and Martiall without pay, hearing conviction or reparation for their losses, and that the severall and respective Lieutenants, Governours and old Garrison soldiers of the *Tower of London, Newcastle, Yorke, Bristol, Plimouth, Glocester, Excester, Chester, Pendennis Castle and the Isle of Wight* be removed with disgrace by our new Generalissimos, meere arbitrary power, notwithstanding our former Votes and Ordinances, for their particular settlement, and new mean seditious Sectaries of our confederacy put into their places.

*Item,* We will that a just difference be made between such persons as never departed from their Covenant and duty, and such as were detestable Newtralisits and oppressours of the people, and to that end we will, that the *Commission of the Peace* be renewed at the pleasure of our flying Speakers, who are to provide, that such be omitted as agree not with the frame and temper of the army and us their Lords and Commons sitting at Westminster, and others be added in their places who have complied with the enemy, and oppressed the people and to that end we agree, that the Earl of *Suffolk*, Earl of *Middlesex*, *William Lord Maynard*, *William Hicks Knight* and *Baronet*, *Iohn Parsons Knight*, *Richard Pigott Knight*, *Edward King Esquire*, *Thomas Welcome Esquire*, and divers others be omitted, and that *Iohn Lockey*, *Thomas Welby*, *William Godfrey*, *Richard Brian*, *Sir Richard Earle Baronet*, & others of that stamp, be added, of whose integrity and faithfulness Quere.

*Item.* We will that for the perpetuall honour of the Lords and Barons of this Realm, whose Ancesters purchased for us with the expence of their lives and blouds, from King *Iohn and Henry the third*, the great Charter, that they shall from henceforth be impeached of high Treason, committed, imprisoned & put out of the house of Peers, and forfeit their lives and estates to our disposing, if they defend that Great Charter, the lives and liberties of the subjects and Parliament against a perfidious and rebellious Army, and us the fugitive Lords and Commons, who fled from our Houses to the Army without cause, and there entred into a trayterous Covenant & Engagement to live & die with the Army, and to destroy the faithfull members that stayed behind at *Westminster*, and all the freedom of this & future Parliaments.

And



And wee will, that henceforth there shall be no House of Peers, distinct from Commons, but that all Peers and Peerage be for ever abolished, and all great and rich mens estates levelled, and made equall to their poorest neighbours, for the better relief and encouragement of the poor Saints.

*Item*, We will that the City of London shall have all her ancient liberties and Customs, in as full and ample manner, as her predecessors ever had; and for that end we will that the Army shall march in a warlike manner towards that City, & passe like Conquerors in triumph over the same. That all the Fortifications & Line about it shall be slighted and thrown down, the Tower taken out of their hands, and put into our Generals, & fortified to over-awe them; the *Militia* of the City changed & divided from that of Westminster, and Southwark, the Lord Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and some leading men of the Common-council, by crafty, sinister, and feigned informations, impeached of high treason, and other great misdemeanours imprisoned and disabled, and others by our appointment and nomination put into their places, and the Citizens and Common-Council-men, shall henceforth make no free Elections of Governours and Officers: That White-hall, the Muse, Minories, Ely-house, and other places, shall be made Citadels, that the posts and chaines in the City and suburbs be taken away, their Gates and purcullices pulled down, their Arms delivered into a common Magazine by our appointment, to disable them from all future possibility of self-defence, or disobedience to our imperiall commands, that so they may willingly deliver us up the remainder of their exhausted treasures & estates, when wee see cause to require the same, and made as absolute Freemen for all their expence of treasure and blood in our defence, as our English Gally-slaves now are in *Algier*.

*Item*, We will that the command of the Navy, & all ships at sea, for the honour of this Nation, and our own, be committed into the hands & government of a Vice-Admirall, (without & against the consent of the Lords) of late but a skippers boy, a common souldier in *Hull*, a Leveller in the Army, impeached by the Generall, for endeavouring to raise a mutiny at the late *Ran-dezvous*, & since that taken with a whore in a Bawdy house, who rode down in triumph to the Downs to take possession of his place in a Coach and four horses, with a Trumpeter & some Troopers riding before & after it, sounding the trumpet in every Town and Village as they passed, to give notice of his new Excellencies arrivall, and make the common people *vaile Bonnet*, and strike sail to his Coxch, and at his late return from the Isle of Wight to the Downs, was rowed from the ship to the town of *Deal*, with the Ensigne in the stern, the Boatswain and all the Rowers bare headed, like so many Gally slaves (a new kind of state which never any Lord Admiral in *England*, though the greatest Peer, yet took upon him, but the King only:) and to maintaine this new pomp and state of his we will and ordain, that all Merchants, aswel  
Natives

Natives as Forraigners, shall pay such new Customes, Impositions, & Excize for all manner of goods & Merchandize whatsoever imported, or exported, as we in our arbitrary wisdoms shall judge meet, under pain of forfeiture of all their said goods & Merchandize, and such other penalties as we shall impose.

*Item*, We will & ordain for the ease and relief of the almost famished poor in these times of dearth and decay of trade, that Excize shall still bee paid by them, and every of them for every drop of small beer they drinke, and for all oyles, dying stufes, & Mercers wares, they shall have occasion to use about their trades and Manufactures, and that the lussy yong souldiers who are able to work & get their livings by the sweat of their brows, shall ramble abroad through all the Kingdom, & like so many sturdy rogues, take free quarter for themselves, horses & companions from place to place, refusing to eat, shall eat up all the provisions in Gentlemens, Yeomens, Clothiers, & other rich mens houses, who formerly relieved the impotent poore with their Almes, and the able with work.

*Item*, We will that *Wm. Lenthall* our Speaker for the time being, shall have a Monopely and plurality of all kind of Offices, for the maintenance of his state and dignity, & recompence of his infidelity, in the deserting the true house of Commons, notwithstanding the self-denying Ordinance to the contrary; & to this end we ordain, that he shall be our perpetual Speaker, & eternally take 5*l.* for every Ordinance that passeth the Commons house, with all other incident (new acted) fees & gratuities; that he shall with thir his office enjoy the custody & profit of the great seal of *England*, the *Dutchy of Lancaster*, together with the Mastership of the Rolls, & as many other places as we shall be able to confer upon him or his son; & that his honoured brother *sr John Lenthall* for his great affection to & care of the subjects liberties committed to his custody, shall have free license to suffer what prisoners he pleaseth to escape out of prison, and *sr Lewis Dives* though voted by us to be arraigned and tryed for high treason this Term, and all persons lying in execution for debts to go and lye abroad at their own houses, and make escapes at pleasure, to the defrauding of Creditors, without being prosecuted, or put out of his Office for the same, provided they always give him a good gratuity for thir theire liberty of escape.

*Item*, We will that our distressed Brethren in *Ireland* may enjoy the benefit of this our *New great Charter*, and all the liberties therein comprized, & that by vertue thereof the supplies, reliefs, men, monies, and the monthly tax of 60000*l.* designed for them, shall be totally interrupted, mis-employed, and divers by King *Cromwel*, and Prince *Ireton* his son-in-law, to maintain, pay and recur their supernumeraries and the Army here: That the noble and valiant *L. Inchiquin* who hath done such gallant service against the Rebels, shall be



be accused and blasted in both our Houses and Pamphlets, and mercenary Diurnall men for a traytor, & Confederate with the Rebels by the L. Lisle; & his confederates, who weares much of Irelands imbezelled treasure on his back, & hath much more of it in his purse, taking not esse then 10. l. or 15. l. as Lord Deputy of that Realm, onely for riding about London streets in his Coach in state, & victorieus honest Colonel Jones discountenanced, discouraged, & both of them removed this Spring from their commands, to advance the Independent cause, and godly party in that Reim.

Lastly, all these new Customs and Liberties aforesaid, which we have granted to be holden in our Realms of *England & Ireland*, as much as appertaineth to us we shall observe: and all men of these Realms, as well Nobles as Commons, shall enjoy and observe the same against all persons in likewise. And for this our Gift and Grant of these liberties, the Nobles and Comons are become our men from this day forward, of life and limbe, and of earthly worship, & unto us shal be slaves and vassals for ever; and we have granted further, that neither we nor any of us shall procure or do any thing, whereby all or any the Liberties in this Charter contained, shall be ever hereafter infringed or broken: And further we ordain, that our Postmaster *Edmund Prideaux*, one of our Fugitive and Army-ingaged Members, who by fraud got into that Office, and keeps it by force against common-right, doe send Posts with Copies of this our Charter, into all Counties, Cities, and places of our Dominions, for recompence of which service, he shall still forcibly enjoy that Office, and that our Sheriffes, Committees, and new made Justices, cause the same to be speedily published accordingly in all our Country-Courts, these being our Witnesses to this Charter.

*William Laud* L. Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

*Thomas* Earl of *Strafford*.

*Sir John Hotham* Knight, Governour of *Hull*.

Lieutenant-Generall *John Hotham*.

All four beheaded by our command at the Tower-Hill for the breach of old *Magna Charta*, and treckery.

*Nathaniel Fines* condemned to lose his head by a Council of War, for delivering up *Bristol* to our enemies, and yet spared by us to bee one of the grand Committee for the safety of this Kingdom and *Ireland*, instead of the exploded Scotch Commissioners.

**F I N I S.**

